

Welcome to our newest weather observers, and welcome back to you with staying power! We sometimes wonder if you understand how much good you do for the country by volunteering to observe weather and send your observations to the National Weather Service and to those in the research community. Hats off to you!

I am Brian Boyd, the service hydrologist for the National Weather Service in Morristown. As the flood warning program leader for the NWS in this end of the state, one of my jobs is also to report on drought conditions. In fact, droughts create more work over the long haul than do floods! In several instances this summer, a site in one county received substantial rainfall, but a site almost next door received next to nothing. This helps delineate where the drought is deepening.

During droughts, your observations of rain and even other elements enables us to better understand where the biggest impacts are likely to occur. We can make better judgments about counties with several CoCoRaHS observers than we can about counties with only a few other types of rain gages. The more information we have the more realistic our determinations. This could translate into the protection of livelihoods.

Another use we have for your rainfall reports is to conduct research on local flooding events. In January 1998, the upper reaches of the Doe River on Roan Mountain received about 8 inches of rain in six hours. On some surrounding ridges, no rain was received. Knowing this helped better understand local processes which caused the heavy rain in that specific basin.

Tennessee is not known as "The Volunteer State" for nothing. We are famous in the CoCoRaHS community for our enthusiasm. Let's keep this going by recruiting more observers. I'd like to challenge to you on a local level, to those in the universities, and to us in the government. We have several counties which are not represented by a CoCoRaHS observer. You might know someone there who would be a good observer, or you might live in one county and work in another and be able to read two gages. Let's fill up the state with every county being represented. Here are the counties we still need: Bledsoe, Dyer, Hancock, Hardeman, Hawkins, Haywood, Henry, Johnson, Lake, Meigs, Polk, Scott, Sequatchie, and Tipton. There are several counties with very few gages or where there are numerous gages very close to each other and we need more in empty areas.

Good luck to all of you, and thank you for being so dedicated.

Sincerely,

Brian Boyd  
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